



Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
U.S. House of Representatives

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Washington, DC 20515

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Ranking Member

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May 15, 2026

The Honorable Donald J. Trump
President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue N.W.
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Trump:

We received notification on April 23, 2026, on the unprecedented extension of a historically broad Jones Act waiver for another 90 days. It has already been made clear that the waiver has done nothing to lower gas prices but instead represents an outsourcing of American jobs to foreign interests and an immediate threat to our national and economic security.

Congress revised the law in 2021 to provide explicit limitations on the use of these waivers to address “an immediate adverse impact on military operations.” This broad waiver has allowed foreign ships, paying foreign taxes and employing foreign mariners, to carry domestic cargo that has no benefit for U.S. military operations. This is against the intent of the law.

The Maritime Administration (MARAD) has reported that numerous voyages by foreign vessels (including vessels built in China) have already taken place under the waiver that fail to meet that unambiguous standard in law. For example, there was a movement of bunker fuels between two points in Corpus Christi, Texas, that simply appears to support commercial vessel operations. How does the transportation of bunker fuel within a port affect national security? Even the MARAD report used to describe the national security purpose of the voyage states “not applicable.”

Despite the Administration’s broad list of over 600 products included under the waiver, transportation under the waiver must be “necessary to address an immediate adverse effect on military operations.”

Yet there seems to be little scrutiny, and certainly no publicly available scrutiny, to ensure that the voyages under the waiver meet the standard of an immediate adverse effect on military operations. Moreover, I have seen no evidence that the Department of Defense (DOD) solicited feedback from any domestic shipping operator on how to fulfill the needs of DOD despite stating that there are “insufficient qualified vessels to meet the needs of national defense without the waiver.”

The Jones Act waiver and its subsequent extension represent a direct threat to the American maritime industry. America's Maritime Action Plan (MAP), which you released in February calls for the increased use of American vessels and American shipyards. The waiver does just the opposite, undermining the MAP and threatening all future investments in the American maritime industry.

Our Committee intends to provide rigorous oversight of the use of the waiver. One issue of particular concern is whether vessels acting under the waiver have fully complied with U.S. laws. As you may know, 46 U.S. Code Section 501(a) limits the government's waiver authority to "navigation and vessel-inspection laws." It would be unlawful for a foreign vessel operator to move cargo under the waiver in violation of U.S. tax, immigration and other laws.

Given the unprecedented nature of this waiver, and the impact it will have on our domestic shipping capabilities—ships, shipbuilding, and mariners—I request that you provide to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure the following information:

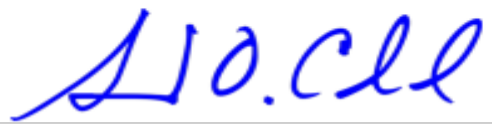
- Provide specific information on how each voyage that has been performed under the current waiver has "immediately" addressed military operations. Identify the military operation and how the voyage provided needed relief to that specific military operation. The generalizations related to the ongoing activities of U.S. Central Command provided in your justification are insufficient for the Committee.
- Provide the market survey, or other mechanism utilized by the DOD or other departments or agencies, to determine that there were "insufficient qualified [U.S.-flag] vessels to meet the needs of national defense without the waiver" for both this waiver and the initial waiver dated March 17, 2026.
- Provide a copy of the text of the waiver to this Committee.

The expansion of the Jones Act waiver for another 90 days is unjustified. The waiver has also provided no relief whatsoever from the rising gas prices caused by the war in Iran. Instead of less war and lower prices, Americans are now getting more war, higher prices and fewer jobs in the American maritime industry. I look forward to receiving detailed information from your office regarding these concerns. There is bipartisan support in Congress for restoring America's maritime dominance and this 90-day extension is completely inconsistent with those efforts.

Sincerely,



Rick Larsen
Ranking Member
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure



Salud Carbajal
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Coast Guard and Maritime
Transportation